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Tells nation, 'We're at war'

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As New York began the heartbreaking task of burying its heroes, President Bush vowed yesterday that U.S. troops will hunt down those behind last week's terrorist attacks, saying simply: "We're at war."

In a call to arms of a kind not heard in generations, Bush told the nation to prepare for a long and sustained assault against terrorism.

"You will be asked for your patience, for the conflict will not be short," the President said in his weekly radio address. "You will be asked for resolve, because the conflict will not be easy. You will be asked for your strength, because the course to victory may be long."

As the radio address was being broadcast, Bush met with a virtual war council of top advisers at the Marine-guarded Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland.

Investigators also pressed ahead, arresting 25 people on immigration violations as part of the probe into the attacks Tuesday that incinerated the World Trade Center and tore a chunk out of the Pentagon.

For the first time, Bush also identified Osama Bin Laden, the exiled Saudi millionaire hiding in Afghanistan, as the prime suspect in the attacks, which included a hijacked jetliner that crashed in a field near Pittsburgh.

"If he thinks he can hide and run from the United States and our allies, he will be sorely mistaken," the President said. "Those who make war against the United States have chosen their own destruction."

Bush's tough words came as the Fire Department laid to rest three of its most exalted leaders: First Deputy Commissioner William Feehan, Chief of Department Peter Ganci and the Rev. Mychal Judge, the department's chaplain.

They were the first members of the department to be buried, but they will not be the last. More than 300 members of the fabled department are listed as dead or missing.

"I have never had anything like this to deal with in my life, and I am sure I never will again," Fire Commissioner Thomas Von Essen said late yesterday. "But we will get through it, because of the people we have out there."

Rescue efforts continue

Meanwhile, thousands of firefighters, cops and other emergency personnel remained on duty at Ground Zero, amid the rubble of the twin towers.

For the first time, FBI officials confirmed the finding of a grim calling card amid the wreckage: a passport belonging to one of the hijackers.

Barry Mawn, head of the FBI's New York office, would not identify the name in the passport, saying only it was found several blocks from the toppled towers.

Von Essen said a massive, underground "crater" full of rubb-

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NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

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ed metal and extending seven stories underground lay beneath the wreckage.

Still, no one was giving up yesterday on the possibility of finding survivors.

"People could still be alive," Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik said. "If you look at other disasters around the world, people have been pulled out of these things five or six days later, so it is still possible. We are not going to give up hope. We are going to keep doing what we're doing."

But as the hours wore on at the site where the 110-story World Trade Center towers stood, it became disturbingly clear: Finding the victims was going to take a long time.

So far, more than 22,008 tons of debris have been removed — most of it one bucketful at a time, passed hand to hand in [illegible] human chains.

It is a tiny fraction of what lies ahead — a combined total of 220 stories of gleaming steel weighing some 1.25 million tons, plus an unknown number of surrounding structures.

By yesterday morning, 159 bodies had been recovered, with 99 identified. The number of people missing jumped by more than 200 to 4,972, Kerik said.

Only five people have been pulled out alive since the collapse, along with more than 400 body parts.

Bodies found at Pentagon

At the Pentagon, workers discovered many bodies, both from the jetliner that crashed into it and from the crushed military complex.

"We are now getting into the heart of the crash site," said Arlington County Fire Chief Ed Plaugher. "I would not be able to describe it in words."

As the grim process proceeded, it was clear that the full force of the federal government was being brought to bear on the investigation.

Among the 25 people arrested on immigration charges were two men detained at an Amtrak station in Fort Worth, Tex. They were interviewed by FBI agents, taken into custody and then flown to New York.

The FBI also raided two apartments in Jersey City yesterday afternoon where the men were thought to have lived at one time, picking up five men still at the apartments during the raid. All were being detained for questioning last night.

The apartments included one just down the street from the Kennedy Blvd. mosque of Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, the blind cleric imprisoned for masterminding the Trade Center bombing in 1993.

The two men picked up in Texas were removed from an Amtrak train during a routine drug search Wednesday night. Although no drugs were found, the men had box cutters, authorities said, and carried about $5,000, according to a federal official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The FBI has identified 19 hijackers who wielded box cutters in seizing control of four jetliners. They crashed two into the twin towers and one into the Pentagon. The fourth plane crashed in a field outside Pittsburgh.

Arrest sparks hope

The first potential break in the investigation came Friday when a man was arrested in New York.

Federal authorities took the man into custody on a material witness warrant, said Jim Margolin, spokesman for the FBI in New York. The warrant allows authorities to hold someone considered crucial to an investigation without filing charges.

The man's identity was withheld, but a law enforcement source said he was the same person detained Thursday at Kennedy Airport after showing a pilot's license issued to his brother.

A warrant was issued yesterday for another man, also an unidentified material witness.

Attorney General John Ashcroft said investigators are making headway.

"We are beginning to understand the ways in which this terrible crime was committed," he said. "The investigation is developing a kind of clarity."

Continued on next page

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